A WINTER SERMON

Preached in the *Cathedrall Church* of St. *Pauls* in LONDON, *upon Shreve Sonday* 1634. *in the afternoone, being a time of extraordinary snow and floods.*

By *John Gore*, Rector of *Wendenlofts in Essex.*

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BIBLIOTHECA·BODLEIANA

TO
THE RIGHT WORSHIP-
FVLL MY TRVELY HONORED
Friend Maſter *Alexander Thiſtlethwayte*
Eſquyer, to whom I owe even
my owne ſelfe.

Right Worſhipfull,

Remember how Noahs Dove *(after ſome longer ſtay then was expected) returned at length unto the* Arke *from whence ſhee was ſent, with a branch of Olive in her mouth. Your worthy Family was the* Arke *out of which I was ſent into theſe farther parts of* Eſſex, *and thus long have I beene abroad, ere I could finde out an Olive-branch fit to preſent you with at my returne; ſuch as it is, I beſeech you take it in good part, and let it finde (as the Authour hath done) favour and acceptance at your hands.*

And the God of peace lengthen your tranquility, and continue to preſerve your houſe and family, that it may ever remaine as an Happy Arke wherein both you and yours may ſucceſſively bee ſaved.

Thus prayes

Your poore ſervant

and ſuppliant

JOHN GORE.

A VVINTER SERMON.

PSAL. 147. ver. 16, 17, 18.

He giveth ſnow like wooll; he ſcatteret h the hoary froſt like aſhes: He caſteth forth his Ice like morſels; who is able to abide his cold? He ſendeth out his word and melteth them; He bloweth with his wind, and the waters flow.

THE laſt time I was in this place, I preached you a Summer-Sermon (out of *Eliahs* prayer, *Iames* 5.17.) it being then a time of extraordinary heate and drought; I am now come up (through Gods mercifull preſervation) to preach youe *Winter-Sermon*, ſuch as the extremity of the

weather, and thē miſery of the wayes hath ēven enforced me to fall upon, beſides my purpoſe and intention; that ſo by a kinde of ſpirituall *Antiperiſtaſis*, your ſoules may receive ſome warmth within, whiles your bodies are encompaſſed with ſo much cold without, for this end, I have made choyſe of ſuch a Text, as will teach us to make good uſe of all manner of winter weather; whether it be ſnow, or froſt, or Ice, or floods, or what ever elſe it be, there is ſtill ſome good uſe to be made of it, if men had but grace to apply their mindes and hearts unto it.

Which that you may the better doe, be pleaſed to obſerve with mee foure generall points, which may bē reduced to foure ſeverall heads, and be thus expreſſed. 1. The providence of God, or the care that God hath to cloath and keepe warme the vēry earth as it were with a Garment of wooll; (*dat nivem ſicut lanam, He giveth ſnow like wooll*) 2. The diligence of God (if I may ſo terme it) that in the cold and bitter evenings, when wee are cloſe and warme by the fire, or when we are at reſt and warme in our beds, then is our God abroad at worke, ſprinkling and ſcattering the hoary or the aſhy froſt for the health and welfare both of man and beaſt, (*ſpargit pruinam ſicut cinerem, he ſcattereth or ſprinkleth the hoary froſt like aſhes.*) 3. The ſeverity of God, whereby he returneth men the ſame meaſure which they themſelves have mete unto others; becauſe for thē moſt part mens *morſels are like Ice*, that is, they come hardly, and coldly, and cruelly from them, to thē poore and hungry; therefore God comes

comes home to them in their owne kinde, and payes them (as it were) with their owne coyne, and gives them *Ice like morſels*, to be both a remembrance, and a revenge of their miſerable inhoſpitality (*proïcit, glaciem ſuam ſicut buccellas, Hee caſteth forth his Ice like morſels.*) 4. Laſtly, ſee the goodneſſe and the tender mercy of God; that when God ſeeth the weather is growne to that extremity, that people are not able to abide his cold, then he hath compaſſion upon mens infirmities, and (as it followeth in the Text) *emittit verbum, & liquefacit, &c. He ſendeth out his word and melteth them, hee bloweth with his winde, and the waters flow*, Theſe be the ſeverall parts and branches of my Text, of each whereof, I will endeavour to ſpeake, as briefely, and as effectually as God and his good ſpirit ſhall enable me. And firſt of the providence of God in cloathing the very earth.

Dat nivem ſicut lanam, Hee giveth ſnow like wooll.

1. The firſt thing I obſerve from hence is this, that the ſnow doth not onely come by the courſe of the planets, or by the coldneſſe of the Climate, or by the vertue of any ſecondary meanes and cauſes; but it is *Donum Dei, the gift of God*; The ſame God that gave us theſe ſoules, is hee that gives us theſe ſnowes, to be a covering and a garment to the naked earth: farre be it from us therefore to murmure or repine, or thinke our ſoules agreeved with God for ſending us ſuch ſnowye weather, to hinder our husbandry, to pinch our cattell, and to ſpend our ſtover, &c. but let us learne of *David*, to give God the glory of all his gifts; and ſit downe and ſay as

Elie did, 1 Sam. 3. 18. *It is the Lord, let him doe what ſeemeth him good*, for whatſoever ſeemeth good to him, cannot but be good, however it ſeemes to us. Conſider (I beſeech you) wherefore it is, that the ſnow, and haile, and ſtorme, and tempeſt are bidden and commanded to praiſe God, *Pſal.* 148. 8. and thinke with your ſelves, how or which way thoſe ſenceleſſe inanimate things can performe that honour to their Maker, unleſſe it be by the Ejaculations and expreſſions of the heart and tongue of man, which is the onely *Lyra animata*, the living harpe of God, to ſound forth his prayſes, and ſet forth his glory for all his gifts and benefits; Alaſſe thoſe liveleſſe creatures cannot doe it of themſelves, but they muſt doe it by us, or rather indeede it is we that are commanded to doe it for them. Wherefore elſe hath God given to man the uſe of the tongue with language and words to expreſſe himſelfe, which hē hath denyed to all other creatures beſides, but onely that *Man* ſhould be (as it were) *The mouth* of all his other creatures, to praiſe and glorifie God in their ſtead, and in their behalfe. If any of us ſhall thinke much to doe ſo little for our God, let us take heede that God doe not by us, as hee threatned to doe by thoſe Prieſts, *Mal.* 2. 2. Even to curſe our very bleſſings, and to make thoſe things which are bleſſings in themſelves, to be little better then croſſes and curſes unto us. For God can give us bleſſings with ſuch a *tang* that the fruition ſhall differ little from the want as he did to the *Iſralites* when he gave them quailes; ſo God gives many a man children with ſo little grace, that they would have accounted

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it even a bleſſing to be barren: ſo God gives many a man wealth with ſo little comfort, that it had been better for their ſoules, if they had begged their bread: ſo God can give us ſnow and raine with ſo little favour, that neither we, nor the earth ſhall receive any comfort or refreſhment by it. Therefore as we deſire to doe our ſelves good, and to have and to hold the good will of our heavenly Father, that he ſhould proſper and bleſſe his bleſſings to us; then let us in no caſe withhold from God *the honour due unto his name*, but returne him ſome glory for all his gifts; for what man will goe into a cold bed to warme it, but he lookes for warmth from it againe: what man will give his friend a ring, but hee hopes that hee will weare it for his ſake, or give him a booke, but he hopes he will reade it for his ſake, or give him any token of love, but that hee hopes hee will accept it and keepe it for his ſake: and ſhall we thinke that God doth not looke for as much as this at our hands, when he gives us ſnow and froſts, &c. beleeve it he doth; and therefore if thou haſt beene defective this way, let me be thy monitour, to doe as *Pharaohs Butler did, Gen. 41. 9. to call to minde thy fault this day*; and to remember that it is thy part and duty to bleſſe God for all his bleſſings: as well for thoſe which thou enjoyeſt in common with others, as for thoſe that thou haſt in peculiar and proper to thy ſelfe; hath God given thee health? bleſſe him for it: hath he given thee wealth? bleſſe him for it: hath he given thee children and friends, and peaceable dayes? bleſſe him for all theſe: but hath hee given thee his good word to inſtruct thee?

Hath

Hath he given thee his good Spirit to comfort thee? Hath he given thee his good grace, to preſerve and keepe thy ſoule? Oh bleſſe him for this above all, for hee hath given thee with it, that which I pray God of his mercy to give us all, *Health and ſalvation in Ieſus Chriſt.* So much for my firſt Obſervation, that the very Snow amongſt other things, is *Donum Dei, the gift of God.* [*He giveth Snow.*]

2. Furthermore, *Iob* tels us that the *Snow* is *Nuntius Dei,* the meſſenger or the ſervant of God, *Iob* 37. 6. *He ſaith to the Snow, be thou on the earth*; and immediately upon the leaſt watch-word of God, there it fals and lies. Thus you ſhall obſerve, that all the creatures, and all the Workes of God, both in heaven and earth, doe in their wayes, and in their kindes ſhew themſelves obedient and dutifull to their Maker, except onely man, and the devill; if God ſpeake to the Windes (though unruly creatures) they obey him, if to the Seas, to the Whales, to the Lyons, &c. they obey him; if God doe but *call for a dearth* (as the Prophet told the *Shunamite,* 2 *Reg.* 8. 1.) or a famine, or for any other judgement, they come at the firſt call, and flye upon the world to plague it for ſinne; you cannot name any creature except man, but is ready at the leaſt becke of God to *fulfill his Word.* Ah what wretched creatures are we, that can finde none in all the world to comply with, but the devill; that can finde no other patterne for our diſobedience, no other partner in our rebellious courſes, but wee muſt fetch a preſident from hell, and from the bottomeleſſe pit. Is it not ſtrange? that whereas Divines obſerve, that

God

God was never called Lord in Scripture till he had created man, as you may ſee in the firſt of *Geneſis*, where it is ſaid, that *God created the heaven and earth*; and *God ſaid let there be light, &c.* onely God without any other attribute; till he had made man, and then the Text cals him the *Lord God* at every word; to intimate that God hath a ſpeciall Lordſhip and Dominion over man, and lookes for more ſpeciall duty and ſervice from man, than from all his other creatures: I ſay then, is it not ſtrange, that no one creature of Gods making doth ſo much diſhonour and diſobey the Lord, as wicked, wretched man; whom the Lord purpoſely made to honour and obey, and doe him ſervice. Looke to all the other creatures, and *David* tels you, they no ſooner receive the leaſt word of command from God, but preſently they *fulfill it*, *Pſal.* 148.8. *Praiſe the Lord ye Dragons and all deepes, fire and haile, ſnow and vapour fulfilling his Word.* There bee a number of us, that are apt enough to heare Gods word; they have *Aures bibulas*, hungry and thirſty eares for that purpoſe; or rather (as the Apoſtle cals it) *pruritum aurium, they have a kinde of itch in their eares*, which like a Tetter, the more it is rub'd, the farther it ſpreads, which makes them unſatiable in hearing the word of the Lord; but where ſhall you finde a man or woman, that hath any care, or makes any conſcience to *fulfill the Word of God* (as thoſe creatures doe?) There be thoſe that will goe a mile or two to *heare* a Sermon; but where ſhall you finde one that will goe out of his owne doore to *doe* a Sermon? I meane, to doe as God would have him;

that is, to repent of his ſinnes, to reforme his life, to follow his calling with a good conſcience, and to walke with his God with an honeſt heart, which is the principall and the maine of Chriſtianity? You know that *Hearing* is but a part of that ſervice wee owe to God; as our Saviour intimates in the Goſpell, where he ſaith, that *Mary choſe the better part*: It is the doing of Gods will, and the *fulfilling of his Word*, that makes our ſervice entire and compleate, and ſuch as God would have it. This leſſon, if we will not learne it by the Scriptures, we may learne it of the very ſenceleſſe creatures, of the very *Snow* in my Text; for (ſaith *Iob*) God doth but ſpeake to the Snow, and ſay, *Be thou on the earth*, and there it reſts, till God remooves it. This is my ſecond obſervation, that the Snow is *nuntius Dei*, the meſſenger and ſervant of God, and may teach man obedience to his Maker. Therefore Chriſt expoſtulateth it as an abſurd thing in men to cry *Lord, Lord*, (*i.*) to profeſſe and ingeminate a verball ſubjection; whereas really and indeede they would not doe ſo much for God as the very ſenceleſſe and bruitiſh creatures.

3. Moreover, *Iob* tels us *Chap.* 38. 22. that God hath, *Theſauros nivis*; *Treaſures of Snow*, which hē reſerveth and keepeth in ſtore againſt ſuch time as the earth ſhall ſtand moſt in neede of it; and ſo you ſhall obſerve in Scripture, that God hath treaſures in ſtore for all kinde of mercies. Hee hath a treaſure of raine (as *Iob* tels us in the ſame place) that is, in the ſcorching heate of Summer, when the earth doth even rend, and ſplit, and gaſpe for want of moyſture,

as

as if it were ready (as it were) to give up the ghost, then doth God goe to his Treasury, and fetch out that same *pluviam munificam*, *Psal.* 68. 9. gracious *enriching raine*, that refresheth the bowels of the earth, and maketh the very Vallies (as *David* speakes) *even to laugh and sing*. The same Prophet *David* tels us *Psal.* 17. 14. that God hath *Thesaurum abscondi tum*, a treasure of foode, and provision for the belly [*Whose bellies thou fillest with thy hid treasure.*] that is, in time of dearth and famine when the City shall be forced to cry to the Country, as the man did to *Paul*, *Act.* 16. 9. *Come out of Macedonia, and helpe us*; and when the Countrey shall thinke (as that Nobleman did. 2 *Reg.* 7.) that the scarcity of provision is so great, *that if the Lord should make windowes in heaven*, it would all be little enough to fill the bellies of the people: then doth God of his goodnesse provide for the poore, then doth he goe to his secret and hidden treasure, and by wayes unlikely and unexpected, doth God take order for their reliefe that put their trust in him. Beyond all these, God hath one Treasure more, more worth than all the rest, and that is *Thesaurus Gratiæ*, the treasure of his grace and goodnesse, which he hath hidden, and laid up in the Breast and Bosome of Iesus Christ, *Colos.* 2. 3. *In him* (saith the Apostle) *are hid the treasures of wisedome and knowledge*. Therefore as in *Egypt*, they that wanted any corne went all to *Ioseph*, who had the Treasures and Storehouses in his owne keeping; so let all that want grace, repare to Iesus Christ, who is the Lord high Treasurer of the graces of God.

Now theſe treaſures of grace are ſaid *to be hidin Chriſt*, not as *Moſes* body was hidden by the *Angel*, to the intent that it ſhould not be found; but as the *woman* in the Goſpell, *Mat.* 13. is ſaid to *hide her leaven in the meale*, that the vertue of it may be diffuſed and diſperſed into every bit of her bread. In this ſence, doth God hide his graces in the heart of Ieſus Chriſt, that all wee that are his ſinfull members may have a taſte and a relliſh of the ſame graces that are in him: according to that *Iohn* 1. 16. *Of his fulneſſe we all receive grace for grace:* that is, (as one ſweetely expounds it) as a child in generation receiveth from his Parents member for member, or as the Paper from the Preſſe receiveth Letter for Letter; or as the glaſſe from the face receiveth Image for Image; ſo doe wee from Ieſus Chriſt receive *grace for grace*; that is, for every grace that is in Chriſt, (appertaining to a generall ſanctification, as humility, zeale, devotion, &c.) there is a grace in us (if we belong to him) in ſome meaſure and proportion anſwerable and agreeable to the ſame in him. Thus are wee (through Gods mercy) partakers of the ſame treaſure with our bleſſed Saviour, and we carry it about (as the Apoſtle ſpeakes) ἐν ὀστρακίνοις *in earthen veſſels*, therefore it ſtands us in hand to take heed of knockes and fals, I meane, into ſinne whereby the treaſure of Gods grace may be endangered in us. Thus you ſee, that God hath treaſures for all mercyes; and indeed his treaſures are all, and onely for mercy; as for that ſame treaſure of wrath, *Rom.* 2. 5. that is ours and none of Gods; God treaſures up nothing but mercy; it is wee that

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ſtore and fill his treaſure with wrath. As the Apoſtle ſaith, *Thou*, (O wicked man) *after the hardneſſe of thy heart treaſureſt up wrath for thy ſelfe againſt the day of wrath*; God doth not treaſure up wrath for thee, nor for any man elſe, but thou treaſureſt and ſtoreſt it up for thy ſelfe; and therefore if God pay thee home in thy owne coyne, and empty thy treaſure upon thy owne head, thou muſt thank thy ſelfe. In a word, though God keepes the treaſures of mercy, yet we keepe the key (at leaſt wee may if wee will our ſelves) for God hath given us a key that will open any treaſure that God hath, and that is humble prayer, it is *Clavis Cæli, the key of Heaven gates*; only take heed that we doe not ſuffer the wards of this key to grow ruſty for want of uſe, leaſt in the day of extremity, when we come to the doore of mercy, our key will not open it. Theſe things have I noted upon occaſion of *Iobs* expreſſion touching the *Treaſures of the Snow*, which God layes up in ſtore for the earth againſt the time of neede; that is, in ſharpe and bitter weather, when the fruites of the earth lye naked and bare, and have nothing to defend them from the cold and killing blaſts of the winde and froſt: then doth God bring forth the ſnowes out of his treaſury, or out of his wardrobe, as a veſture of Wooll to keepe warme the corne that it take no hurt, as it followeth in my Text, *Dat nivem ſicut lanam, He giveth Snow like Wooll.*

And why *like Wooll?* I ſuppoſe for two principall reaſons.

1. *Propter albedinem*, for the whiteneſſe of it. That Metaphor it pleaſeth the holy Ghoſt to uſe

elſewhere, *Pſal.* 51.7. *Purge me with Hyſope, and I ſhall be cleane, waſh me, and I ſhall be writer then Snow*, to ſhew what a bleſſed change and alteration Gods mercy and our repentance makes in the ſoule of a poore ſinner, who can tell where the ſpot was, when the skinne is rinſed; now the onely waſhing-lye for the heart and for the inward parts, is that which is made with the aſhes of our ſinnes, to rinſe and ſcoure our ſoules. That ſoule which before was as blacke as pitch or hell with wickedneſſe, and workes of darkeneſſe, being rinſed by repentance, and renued by the Spirit of Ieſus Chriſt, becomes as cleane and white, as pure and unſpotted in the eyes of God, as the driven Snow is in ours. *Take away my iniquity* (ſaith *David*) *and thou ſhalt finde none*: when God hath taken away a mans iniquity, his ſinnes are no more to be found than if they had never beene. See *Eſay* 1.16. *Waſh ye, make ye cleane, put away the evill of your doings from before my eyes, &c.* What then? Why then (ſaith God, *ver.* 18.) *Though your ſinnes be as ſcarlet, they ſhall be as white as Snow, though they be red like crimſon, they ſhall be as Wooll.* You know that crimſon and ſcarlet is ſo deepe a dye, that all the Art under heaven cannot alter it or take it out: yet the Lord can make of a *Scarlet-ſinner*, a *Milke-white-Saint*: God can take out the deepeſt dyes of ſinne, though they be ſinnes in graine, and the ſoule ſhall become as the Snow or Wooll that was never dipt or ſtained. Therefore when thou goeſt or looke ſt abroad in the Winter time, and ſeeſt the Snow lye white as Wooll upon the ground; then reflect upon thy ſelfe and ſay, *O that my ſoule was of this colour*:

lour: Oh that all the blackneſſe and darkeneſſe, the deformity and uglineſſe of my ſinnes were done away, and that my ſoule were reſtored to that *Candor* and whiteneſſe, and bright ſincerity that this Snow doth repreſent. Beloved, it is not the outward brightneſſe and beauty of the countenance and complexion that God regards, where there is *cor nigrum*, a blacke baſe heart within; but it is that ſame *decor ab intus* that inward intrinſecall comelineſſe that *David* ſpeakes of, *Pſal.* 45. 14. that makes the King o' heaven take pleaſure in our beauty. Let neither man nor woman therefore boaſt or be proud of their white *Outſide*, but rather labour and pray for a white *Inſide*, that they may be as *Moſes* was ſaid to be ἀστεῖος τῷ θεῷ, *Act.* 7. 20. faire to God, (for ſo the Originall hath it) we tranſlate it, He was exceeding faire, but the Greeke ſignifies, *He was faire to God*, and when all is done that is the true beauty that commends us to God, when the other beauty is withered and wrinkled, and cleane gone, then doth this *Iuveneſcere* grow younger and better with age. Whenſoever therefore God ſends a Snow, doe not thou (like a bruite beaſt) onely trample upon it, and tread it under foote; but make ſome benefit of it to thy ſoule, and ſay within thy ſelfe, This is the colour of my Saviour, *Revel.* 1. 14. The Saints in heaven are all of this colour, as white as this very Snow in grace and glory, *Revel.* 7. 14. Lord make my ſoule of the ſame colour too, that I may no longer reſemble the devill, in being blacke with ſinne and iniquity, but may reſemble the Saints and Angels in being white with innocency and integrity.

Conſider

Conſider (I beſeech you) why is it ſaid, 1 *Cor.* 15. *That fleſh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdome of God*: The meaning cannot be, that the ſubſtance of fleſh and blood cannot inherit Gods Kingdome, for then what ſhould become of all the Saints and ſervants of God, whoſe ſoules are gone beforehand into heaven, while their bodies lye in the duſt expecting glory; but the meaning truely is, that the corruption of fleſh and blood cannot come within that Kingdome; that is, fleſh and blood as it is corrupted and defiled, as it is blacked and beſmeared, and ſtained with ſinne and Satan, ſo it ſhall never come within the Kingdome of Ieſus Chriſt, and of God our heavenly Father: but when fleſh and blood ſhall be waſhed, aud cleanſed, and ſanctified, by the grace, and by the Spirit, and by the blood of Ieſus Chriſt. and become as white as Snow, then is it come to the right colour, then, and not till then, is fleſh and blood fit for Gods Kingdome, and for the bleſſed ſociety of the Saints in light. So much for the firſt reaſon, why God is ſaid to give Snow like Wooll, for the purity and whiteneſſe of it.

2. *Propter utilitatem*, for the benefit and warmth of it; for though the Snow be cold and chilling to us, it is warme and comfortable to the earth, like a garment of Wooll upon the backe of it, to preſerve and cheriſh the kindly fruites of the earth, that in due time (through Gods mercy) wee may enjoy them. Reaſon therefore with thy ſelfe, if God ſo cloathe the earth which is but *ſcabellum Dei*, *the footeſtoole of God*, the loweſt and baſeſt part of his Creation;

Creation; *Will he not much more cloathe thee*, O man, thou art *Imago Dei, the Image of God*, that carryeſt the ſtampe of God upon thy ſoule, as the coyne beareth the ſtampe of the King upon the ſide: ſurely he that taketh care for Oxen, will much more take care for Chriſtians. He that feedeth the young Ravens that call upon him, will ſurely feede young Infants that call upon him: *He that cloatheth the graſſe of the field*, which doth him no ſervice, will certainely provide cloathing for us if wee doe him any ſervice as we ought to doe. Remember how God provided for the *Iſraelites* when they were in the wilderneſſe, where there was no new apparell to be bought, God ſo provided that the old apparell wch they had, did neither weare out, nor waxe too little for them: but their cloathes grew as their bodies grew, and their ſhooes grew as their feete grew, and the one was as laſting and as durable as the other.

Take no care therefore (ſaith our Saviour) (meaning no diſtruſtfull care) *what ye ſhall eate or drinke*, or what cloathes ye ſhall have to cover you; Why? *for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have neede of theſe things*: Alas, may ſome ſay, this is but ſmall comfort, to tell a man, bē of good comfort, for God knoweth thy wants; or to tell a ſicke man, be of good comfort, for God knoweth thy diſeaſes; or to tell a man that is undone, be of good comfort, for God knoweth thy loſſes, &c. I ſay this, that God knoweth all things were but a feeble Cordiall, if ſo be, that the knowledge of God were not (as it is) accompanyed and attended with the helpefullneſſe and the goodneſſe of God, that whereſoever

God knowes there is a want, hee takēs a ſpeedy courſe to relieve and ſupply it; according to that, 2 *Chron.16.6. Oculi domini diſcurrunt, &c. the eyes of the Lord runne to and fro throughout the whole earth* (not barely to ſee and take notice of what is wanting or amiſſe, but) *to ſhew himſelfe ſtrong in the behalfe of them, whoſe hearts are perfect towards him.* Doubt not therefore but ſtedfaſtly beleeve, hee that is ſo carefull to cloathe the earth, will have a greater care to cloathe thee, if thou belongeſt to Heaven.

Laſtly, from hence, they that are rich in this world, may learne (in a contrary ſence to that of Lucifer) to be *ſimiles altiſſimo* like to the moſt high God, I meane in goodneſſe and tender mercy; we uſe to ſay *dives quaſi divus*, to intimate that a rich man ſhould be to the poore, as *Moſes* was to *Aaron*, in ſome ſence a God, *Exod.4.* to ſuccour and defend them in the time of neede: ſo then, looke how God above doth in the Summer time refreſh the bowels of the earth with raine, and in the Winter time keepe warme the backe of it with Snow: ſo ſhould they *Philemon*-like, refreſh the bowels of the poore that arē pinched with hunger; and *Dorcas*-like provide ſome cloathing for the backes of the poore, that are not able to cloath themſelves. It is recorded of *Iob* to his eternall happineſſe and honour, that the *loynes of the poore did bleſſe him, being warmed with the fleece of his ſtocke.* Oh what a bleſſed thing it is to have the bleſſing of the poore and the bleſſing of God into the bargaine, and all for the offals of a mans eſtate. Such a man ſhall be

bleſſed

bleſſed in his name, bleſſed in his perſon, bleſſed in his poſterity; God will bleſſe a charitable minded man, men will bleſſe him, heaven will bleſſe him; earth will bleſſe him, all that ever have been comforted or cloathed by him will bleſſe him too; their backes will bleſſe him, their bellies will bleſſe him, their ſoules will bleſſe him; his houſe ſhall bee filled with bleſſings, as a cruell mans houſe is filled with curſes. Therefore as *David* ſaid of the men of *Iabez*, when newes was brought him that they had buryed the bones of *Saul*, 2 *Sam.* 2.5. *Bleſſed be ye of the Lord, the Lord recompence you this mercy*: So may I ſay of a mercifull minded man, bleſſed be ſuch a man of the Lord, the Lord will ſurely recompence him, mercy for mercy, kindeneſſe for kindneſſe, and whatſoever coſt hee hath beſtowed upon earth, hee ſhall finde it a hundred fold with God in heaven. This leſſon men of wealth and ability may learne of the very Snow, or rather of the God that ſends it; not to lay all upon their owne backs, *ſaltus et ſylvas* (as he ſaid) groves and grounds and all to decke up themſelves, but lay ſomething out upon the backes of Chriſts naked members, that they may heare that comfortable doome at the laſt day, *Come ye Bleſſed of my Father, for I was naked and ye cloathed, &c.*

I had a conceite as I came by the way, that the Snow did carry in it a lively reſemblance of the ſtate of this world, in ſundry paſſages, I will but name them, and leave them to your conſideration.

1. As the earth lies warme under the Snow, and

feeles not the bitter blaſts of winde and froſt, which other poore creatures ſhrinke and ſmart for; ſo fares it with the rich men of this world, that lye warme with their wealth about them, and have no feeling nor compaſſion of the cold and hunger, the miſeries and neceſſities of their poorer brethren. So *Dives* being warme within, had no feeling of poore *Lazarus* without: now *Dives* ſignifies a *rich man*, and *Lazarus* (in the Originall) ſignifies one *qui auxilio deſtitutus eſt, one that ſtands in neede of helpe*; and the intent of the Parable is to ſhew, that the rich are commonly as deſtitute of pitty, as the poore are deſtitute of helpe, the one hath little or no feeling of the other ſufferings.

2. You may obſerve how the Snow goes by drifts, the Wind fetcheth it off from one place to fill up another, many a peece of ground is made naked and bare, to fill up ſome ditch, or pile up againſt ſome hedge, and there it lies to keepe thoſe places warme that were warme before: Even ſo doth the wealth of this world goe by drifts, the winde of adverſity fetcheth it off from one man to fill up the unſatiable ditch of another man; and many a mans meanes (like the Snow) is blowne cleane away from him and his poſterity into the hands of Vſurers and rich Oppreſſours, to keepe them warme that were warme already, to increaſe their wealth that had too much before: juſt as *Naboths* Vineyard was blowne away from him and from his children, into the territory and demaines of wicked *Ahab*.

3. Looke how the boyes and other youths toyle themſelves in the cold to make a Snow-ball, that ſhall

ſhall licke up the other Snow, and laſt when that is gone; ſo doth many a covetous man toyle himſelfe in the world, and licke up his poore neighbours with hard bargaines, and cruell dealings, and all this to rowle up himſelfe a private wealth, which when he hath done, is but like a Snow-ball, it may laſt for a time, but *vix gaudet tertius hæres*, it is a venture but ſome unthrifty Heire will waſte it and melt it away, as faſt, and as ill as ever his father got it.

4. The Snow blindes a mans eyes, that when he comes into a darke roome, he can ſcarſe diſcerne any thing; Thus are many a mans eyes dazled with the vanities and vices of the world, that when he ſhould come to looke inward into the darke corners of his heart, to ſee how the caſe ſtands betwixt God and his ſoule, like the blinded *Sodomites*, hee gropes at noone-day, and cannot find the doore of Gods mercy to enter at. *Solomon* ſaith, that *gifts blinde the eyes of the wiſe*; In the Originall it is *Pickim: ſuch as have their eyes open*; the meaning is, that corruption and bribery ſo dazleth many a wiſe man, that though his eyes be open to the world-ward, to hell-ward, they are blinde to God-ward, and to heaven-ward, and cannot ſee into the things that belong to the right way of pleaſing of God, and ſaving their owne ſoules.

5. As many a dunghill, and many a dirty ſlough is hid under a driſt of Snow, that a man can neither ſee it nor ſuſpect it: ſo is many a baſe minde, many a falſe heart, hid under a faire outſide, that will make profeſſion and promiſes of favour and friendſhip to a man in proſperity; but let him be caſt or driven

upon them in adverſity, hee ſhall finde them like a rotten quagmire under a heape of Snow, a meanes rather th ſinke him, than to ſave or ſuccour him at ſuch a time.

6. Laſtly, as *Leontius* ſaid once to his ſonnes, pointing with his finger to his gray-haires, ταυτίσι τῆς χιόνος λυθείσης, &c. when this Snow melts, there will be a flood; ſo let all old weather beaten ſinners, *pueri centum annorum* (as the Prophet ſpeakes) *Eſay* 65. 20. *That are aged in time and ſinne*, but children in grace and knowledge, that have feathered their neſts in this world, and have nothing to take to in the world to come; let them beware (as hee ſaid) leaſt a flood of fire and brimſtone in the infernall lake, doe follow upon the melting of their Snowye heads, upon the diſſolution of their ſinfull ſoules and bodies.

Theſe thoughts came in upon the by, and therefore I will not ſtand to enlarge them, but haſten to the next generall part of my Text, as it followeth in the next place, *Spargit pruinam ſicut cinerem*; *Hee ſcattereth or ſprinkleth the hoary froſt like aſhes.*

2. This I termed the Diligence of God; *He that keepeth Iſrael neither ſlumbereth nor ſleepeth*; but when we are aſleepe, God is awake, when wee are at reſt, God is at worke; when wee are taking our eaſe within, then is our God taking paines abroad, to ſprinkle the hoary Froſt in the evening, for our health and welfare in the morning. The conſideration hereof ſhould move us, not onely to praiſe God for his *Day-mercies*, as *David* did [*Seven times a day will I praiſe thee* (ſaith he) *Pſal.* 119.] becauſe hee knew

knew that ſo, and more than ſo often he was beholding to God every day that came over his head; but alſo wee have juſt cauſe to remember God for his *Night-mercies*, for his preſervation and protection, for his cuſtody and care that hee hath of us in the night, as well as in the day time. *Have I not remembred thee on my bed* (ſaith *David* elſewhere) *and thought upon thee when I was waking, Pſal. 63. 7.* So if thou haſt forgotten God at thy board, remember him on thy bed, if thou haſt not thought upon him in the day, thinke upon him the more in the night, and when at any time God holdeth thy eyes waking (as he did *Davids* often) then conſider and call to minde Gods mercies, and thine owne ſinnes, be thankefull for the one, be humble for the other, and then lie downe in the peace of Ieſus Chriſt. And in the morning when thou walkeſt abroad, and ſeeſt the hoary froſt lye upon the ground like aſhes; then thinke with thy ſelfe, this is the worke of Gods owne hands, *God hath ſurely beene in this place, and I was not aware of it.*

Now marke the manner of Gods working, *Spargit pruinam, he ſprinkleth the hoary froſt*; that is, he doth it in ſuch a ſecret inſenſible inviſible manner, that no man living can perceive it, till God have done his worke and finiſhed it, and even ſo, it pleaſeth God to worke and bring to paſſe the regeneration of a ſinfull ſoule; *My Father worketh* (ſaith our Saviour) *and I worke*, and yet both worketh after ſuch a ſecret way, that untill a man be converted, the worke of Gods grace cannot be imagined nor perceived, as it was with our Saviour at his reſurrection,

rection, when he was riſen, he appeared and ſhewed himſelfe, but the manner of his riſing, or how, or which way he aroſe and got out of the Sepulchre, no man living ſaw or could conceive, as *Solomon* ſaith, *that the way of a ſhip in the ſea is not to be known or found:* a man may ſtand upon the ſhore, and ſee the ſhip, and the ſea, and the ſhip going on the ſea, but the way of a ſhip in the ſea is unknowne, and undiſcernable: even ſo the wayes of God in tranſlating men out of the ſtate of ſinne and death, into the ſtate of grace and life, are *ſine veſtigijs*, unſearchable, and *paſt finding out*. Many a one is troubled that he knowes not the very inſtant of his converſion and regeneration to God, and therefore makes queſtion of his Chriſtian calling; but you know there is great difference betwixt a man that is ſuddenly converted as *Paul* was, like a *brand ſnatcht out of the fire*, (as Saint *Iude* ſpeakes) in the very heate of their ſinnes: and ſuch as have the grace of God wrought in them by degrees (as *Timothy* had *ſenſim ſine ſenſu*, now a little and then a little, by the ſecret ſupplies of the Spirit of grace: now it is an eaſie matter for the one to ſet downe the time and manner of their regeneration: not ſo for the other. But the effect of all is this; if a man can find in himſelfe the *markes of the Lord Ieſus*, (as the Apoſtle ſpeaketh) I meane the infallible ſignes and ſymptomes of grace, (as a deſire to feare God, a care to pleaſe him, and a kindly repentance when he hath done amiſſe) let him never make queſtion of his owne converſion, but take it as an undoubted evidence to his ſoule that God hath received him into the ſtate of mercy, where-

wherein hee will reſerve him for ever unto Ieſus Chriſt. No man makes queſtion how the froſt is gendred when he ſees it lye upon the earth, becauſe he knowes it is the handy worke of God. And ſo is this.

Againe, *ſpargit pruinam.* Looke how God doth with the hoary froſt, how hee ſcatters it upon the graſſe, that no one ſpot of ground hath it all, but every pile of graſſe hath ſome ſprinkling of it: ſo he doth with all his heavenly gifts and graces, no man ever was ſo happy to have the fulneſſe of grace, ſave onely our Lord and Saviour Ieſus Chriſt: All wee have but our ſprinklings, a ſprinkling of faith, a ſprinkling of zeale, a ſprinkling of repentance, and other graces, ſome more, ſome leſſe, as God is pleaſed to diſtribute it. Hence the grace of God is compared unto two things in Scripture, which are both things of ſprinkling, namely, *Salt*, and *Seede*. Our Saviour compares it unto ſalt, *Marke 9. ult. Have ſalt in your ſelves, and be at peace one with another.* Now you know, They that ſeaſon meate, doe not lay their ſalt all on a heape, but ſcatter it and ſprinkle it all over, that every part may be made ſavoury by it: So doth God diſtribute to every man a meaſure of grace, that his ſoule may be ſeaſoned and all his ſervices be made ſavoury to the Lord, that he may ſmell in them, as he did in *Noahs* ſacrifice, *Odorem quietis, a Savour of reſt*, Saint *Iohn* compares the grace of God unto Seede, 1 *Ioh. 3. 9. Hee that is borne of God cannot ſinne*, (meaning ſinne unto death) Why? *quia ſemen Dei, becauſe the ſeed of God abideth in him.* Now you know no ſower layes his ſeede all on a heape, but ſcatters and ſprin-

kles it all over his land, that every furrow may have ſome part of the ſeede, and yeeld him againe ſome fruite of increaſe. Thus doth God ſow the ſeede of eternall life in the mindes and hearts of all faithfull people, there is no one that hath all grace, and there is no one but hath ſome, ſome ſprinkling of every grace. For this cauſe (I ſuppoſe) the blood of Chriſt is called the *blood of ſprinkling*, *Heb.* 12. 24. in alluſion to the Paſſeover where the blood of the Paſchall Lambe was ſprinkled on the poſts of the doore to ſave the houſe from the deadly ſtroke of the revenging Angel. So is the blood of Ieſus Chriſt ſprinkled (as it were) by the finger of God upon the ſoules and conſciences of all penitent ſinners, to ſave their ſoules from death, and to take out the blots and ſtaines of our ſinnes. Looke how *Aqua-fortis* takes out the blots of Inke out of Paper, ſo doth this precious blood take out the blots of ſinne out of the ſoule; and bleſſed of God is that man that is ſprinkled with it. All thoſe ſprinklings of blood in the Law of *Moſes*, were all but types and ſhaddowes of this *blood* of ſprinkling *which ſpeaketh better things than that of Abel*, becauſe *Abels* blood cryed for revenge, but the blood of our Saviour cryes for mercy, and drownes the cry of our deadly ſinnes, that cry and roare for vengeance. And therefore if thou haſt not had the grace to keepe thy ſelfe unſpotted of the world, but rather for want of grace and care haſt beſtained and beſpotted thy ſelfe with filthy luſts and ſinnes: then let me adviſe thee thus to doe; as *Ioſeph* of *Arimathea went to Pilate and begged the body of Ieſus*, *John* 19. 38. So doe thou goe to God and begge the blood of Ieſus, and deſire

the

the Lord to ſprinkle it upon thy ſoule, that thy ſins may be done away, and thy iniquities may be ſeene no more: for even this kinde of ſprinkling is as eaſie to God, as that whereof my Text here ſpeaketh. *Hee ſcattereth* or *ſprinkleth the hoary froſt like aſhes.*

[*Sicut cinerem, like Aſhes*] We read *Exod.9.8.* That *Moſes* by Gods appointment tooke aſhes from off the furnace, and ſprinkled them towards heaven, and they bred botches and boyles and blaines upon man and beaſt. If God ſhould ſprinkle ſuch aſhes among us, or if the hoary froſt ſhould bring forth ſuch effects, what a woefull caſe were we in: How much cauſe therefore have wee (as the Prophet ſpeakes, *Hoſ.3.5.*) *To feare the Lord and his goodneſſe*; in that being ſo unthankefull and ſo evill as we are, yet God is pleaſed out of his owne goodneſſe and mercy (not becauſe we pleaſe him, but becauſe mercy pleaſeth him, *Micha.7.18.*) to doe us good and no harme all our dayes, and to ſprinkle ſuch wholeſome, healthfull froſt, as ſhall doe every man good and no man hurt. It is ſaid, *Exo.16.14.* That *Manna*, which was called *Angels-food*, not becauſe the *Angels* did eate it, but becauſe the Angels did prepare it, and bring it and make it ready for the peoples eating: this *Manna* lay upon the ground like the hoary froſt in the morning. Doubtleſſe it was to intimate, that *Manna* is no more to God, than aſhes are to us; and that if neede were, rather than his people ſhould famiſh, God can turne the hoary froſt into Angels food, that we might live upon the one, as the Iſraelites did upon the other forty yeares together. *David* was driven to a low ebbe, when

he ſaid, *Pſal.*102. 9. *Cinerem tanquam panem manducavi, I have eaten aſhes like bread.* I take it, it was not ſo much out of neceſſity, as to teſtifie his humility, that hee did eſteeme himſelfe ſo vile a ſinner, that hee was not worthy to feede upon any better food, and that duſt and aſhes were too good for him. And ſo in the dayes of old, they were wont in times of ſorrow and ſadneſſe to ſprinkle duſt and aſhes upon their heads; from whence (I take it) our *Aſh-wedneſday* hath its name, being *dies cinerum* a day wherein men humbled them before the Lord in duſt and aſhes: this they did to expreſſe the humiliation and deepe abaſement of their ſoules, that they thought themſelves not worthy to be above ground, but to be under earth in the grave, dead and diſſolved into duſt and aſhes, I will not here preſſe the imitation of the ceremony, but onely the obſervation of the ſubſtance of that act which concernes us as neerely, as it did them: and that is, I would have you be as humble, as ſorrowfull, as dejected and as penſive for your ſinnes, as vilely and baſely, and meanely conceited of your ſelves, as they that ſtrawed aſhes upon their heads, or as they that eate aſhes inſtead of bread, and mingled their drinke with weeping.

And ſo I come to the third generall point of my Text as it followeth in the third place.

3. *Proïcit ejus glaciem ſicut buccellas, Hee caſteth forth his Ice like morſels.*

Me thinkes the Ice hath ſome reſemblance of the ſtate of this world, which is dangerous two waies. 1. For ſlipping. 2. For breaking.

1. For ſlipping, ſo the Fathers call the ſinnes of the

the godly by the name of *Lapſus*, ſlippings, becauſe (like men on Ice) they ſlipt and fell ere they were aware of it. And *David* ſaith of the men of this world, *Pſal.*73.*That God hath ſet them in ſlippery places.* Now a man that walkes in a ſlippery place, had need walke very circumſpectly and very warily, leaſt he get a ſlip unawares that hee cannot recover himſelfe without hurt and danger: So the Apoſtle adviſeth all good Chriſtians to ſee that they *walke Circumſpectly. Ephe.*5 15.*not as fooles, but as wiſe.* A foole will venture to runne headlong on the Ice, as if he were upon firme ground, but a wiſe man will be very circumſpect and wary, and take heede to every ſtep he takes, becauſe he knows the danger. So ſhould a Chriſtian take heed to his wayes, and if he finde himſelfe going, that he is ready to ſlip and fall from God into any ſinne, or to be carried headlong by the ſtrength of his owne corruption, or other temptation into any dangerous or wicked action: let him then call unto the Lord as *David* did *Pſal.*119.117. *ſuſtenta me, &c. ſtay thou me up, and I ſhall be ſafe*; like a man ready to fall, he prayes God to uphold and ſtay him up. For it is certaine, a man hath not any power of himſelfe to ſtay himſelfe, but that, as *Hanna* tels us in her Song, 1 *Sam.*2.9. It is God that keepeth the feete of his Saints, and ſtayes them when they are going into an evill courſe. And *Moſes* tels us, *Deut.*33.3. That God hath all his Saints in his hands, (as a Nurſe hath her child) and will not ſuffer them to fall into their own miſchiefe: and therefore our care muſt be by daily prayer to put our ſelves into Gods hands, and deſire God to leade us by his grace and his good ſpirit, & not leave us to our ſelves, for then wee ſhall ſurely ſlip and fall into evill. That

child that cares not to be led, but will go of himſelfe, gets many a knocke and many a ſhrewd fall; but the child that is fearefull and will cry to be led, that child ſcapes many a broken face: Therefore *David* deſires God to leade him, *Pſal.* 5. 8. Whereupon ſaith *Muſculus*, *Duci cæcorum eſt, puerorum, infirmorum, &c.* to be led, is a thing that properly belongs to ſuch as are blinde, and to children, and impotent perſons; now if a blind man, or a child ſhould go upon the Ice without ſome guide to leade them, what a dangerous caſe were they in; even ſuch are we without the guidance of God. The Ice is dangerous, and ſo is the world, take heede of ſlipping.

2. For breaking, many a one we have knowne and heard of, that have ventured confidently on the Ice, upon the Thames, till it hath broken under them, and they have periſhed irrecoverably; ſo have many made a great ſhew in the world, have beene in great dealings, and beene confident of their fortunes, till the Ice hath broken, their credits have crackt, and they ſunke on a ſudden. See 2 *Reg.* 1. How ſecurely *Ahaziah* walked on his wonted pavement, fearing no danger, nor diſtruſted any ill event; and all on a ſudden, the floore that he walkt upon, or ſome grate that was in the floore, breakes under him, and he got ſuch a fall that he never could recover it till his death. It is not good therefore for any man to be too confident of his owne eſtate, vainely, ſaying with *Iob*, 29. 18. *I ſhall dye in my neſt*, or with *David*, *Pſal.* 30. 6. *I ſhall never be moved*: but rather as the Apoſtle adviſeth, *Let him that thinketh he ſtandeth take heed leaſt he fal.* For thoſe that ſtand faſteſt upon earth have but ſlippery footing: it is but a kinde of Ice, take heede of breaking.

And

And yet there is another kinde of Iee, which hee that can breake or have it broken is a happy man: and that is the Ice of ſinne, I meane the *hardneſſe of heart*; for looke how Ice hardens the water, ſo doth ſinne harden the heart, and make it inſenſible of any danger, and untractable to any goodneſſe. As long as the froſt holds, the Ice and the water are all one, till the thaw comes, and then it breakes into theſe *buccella's*, *theſe morſels*, that my Text ſpeakes of: ſo as long as a man is frozen in the dregs of ſinne, and accuſtomed to an evill courſe of life, ſo long his ſinnes and he are all one, all the perſwaſions in the world cannot part them; till God be pleaſed to ſend downe that ſame *Gratiam mollificativam* (as Divines call it) that ſame mollifying and melting grace, that his heart begins to thaw, and his ſinnes and hee begin to part, then doth hee caſt out thoſe *buccellas peccati*, thoſe morſels of ſinne by daily confeſſion and contrition to God, which before lay and wounded his conſcience that hee could never bee at peace. And this is that which the Scripture cals *the breaking of the heart*, it is juſt like the breaking of Ice, when the heart is diſſolved with griefe and godly ſorrow, and his ſinnes begin to breake away by repentance and reformation of life, then doth the Spirit of God (which *Zachary* cals the Spirit of grace and ſupplication) doe as in the firſt creation *Incubare ſuper aquas*, ſit and brood (as it were) upon theſe waters to hatch new graces, to create a new heart, and make him a new creature in Ieſus Chriſt.

I might obſerve further, how reverently, how religiouſly the Prophet *David* ſpeakes of the Ice and cold; that he cals the Ice *ejus Glacies*, *Gods Ice*, and the

the cold *ejus frigus, his cold,* to ſhew that God hath a hand in all ill-weather; and that wee ought not to blame the creatures, but to remember their Creator, who for our ſinnes juſtly is diſpleaſed. But I haſten to the laſt part of my Text, and that is,

4. The compaſſion and tender mercy of God, that God hath not the heart to hold his people long under a judgement, but as in the tenth of *Iudges*, when the people were throughly humbled, his ſoule was grieved for the miſery of *Iſrael*, and he ſent a remedy out of hand; and as *Davids* heart after ſome ſpace of time began to yerne after *Abſalon*, whom for his rebellion he had juſtly baniſhed, and he muſt needes recall him home. So when we relent, God relents, when we begin to be grieved for our ſins, then doth God beginne to bee grieved for our puniſhments, when our hearts are melted within, God melts the earth without, as it followeth in the Text, *Emittit verbum & liquefacit, &c. Hee ſendeth out his word and melteth them, Hee bloweth with his winde and the waters flow.*

He ſendeth out his word, (that is) his command, for ſo the *tenne Commandements* are called *Decem verba*, the ten words of God: *And he bloweth with his winde,* (in the Originall it is) *flabit ſpiritus, his ſpirit ſhall blow,* for the ſpirit of God, and winde, and breath of God are all one. Now marke from the connexion of theſe two, How the word of God, and the ſpirit of God goe evermore together. [*He ſendeth out his word,* and *bloweth with his ſpirit.*] Iuſt as in the body of a man, the veynes and the Arteryes goe ever together, the veynes carry the blood and the Arteryes carry the ſpirits, for every veyne in the body there is an Artery

goes

goes along with it. So whereſoever there is a veyne of truth, I meane, where the word of God is faithfully preached, there is *vehiculum ſpiritus*, an Artery for the ſpirit of God to accompany and goe along with it, to mollifie and intenerate that ſame *nervum ferreum* (which the Prophet ſpeakes of) that *Iron-ſinew* of unbeliefe, and to make the word effectuall for the melting and thawing of the frozen hearts of ſinners. Now if you looke backe upon this kindly Thaw that God hath ſent us, after ſo long and lamentable a time of Snow, and Ice, and Cold, you ſhall ſee in it a lively reſemblance of the inward and ſpirituall thaw and melting of a hardned heart, that hath beene frozen a long time in the dregges of ſinne, and beene utterly uncapable of any grace, untill ſuch time as God doth ſend out his Word and melteth him, and bloweth upon his ſoule with that ſame truely ſo called *ventus favonius*, that favourable winde of his holy Spirit that makes the waters of repenting teares fall downe from his eyes, I will but name the particulars and ſo conclude.

1. The Thaw is alwaies accompanied with a change of weather; the skye which before was faire and cleare and bright, doth then grow cloudy and ſad and darke with foggy miſts and vapours, that a man hath no pleaſure to be abroad in it. And thus it is with a repenting ſoule, when God ſends this ſpirituall thaw, a man ſhall finde a change of weather in his heart, his joy will be changed into ſorrow, his mirth into melancholly, his ſongs and merry tunes into ſighes and ſobs, and he ſhall ſenſibly perceive the foggy vapors of his ſinnes ariſe out of his heart into his head, and come trickling downe in teares at his eyes. It is ſaid

in thē *Pſalmes*, that therefore the wicked feare not God, becauſe they have no changes, but ſtill continue in one eſtate of proſperity and pride, and ſo thinke to paſſe *a delicijs ad delicias*, from the joyes of earth to the joyes of heaven; but that will not be, if ever God intend to ſave their ſoules, hee will finde a time to ſend a thaw into their hearts, and then let them tell me, if they doe not find a change of weather in their conſciences.

2. If it chance to thaw, and then freezē againe the next day, this makes the wayes and paſſages worſe than they were before. So when a mans heart ſhall melt a little on the Sonday, and freeze againe all the weeke after; as *Pharaohs* melted for a time, and then preſently hardned againe; this relapſe is worſe than the former: as water having beene once heate, and then cooled againe, growes colder after than before. Wee ſee, that even marble in ſome weather will ſtand on drops, and yet retaines its wonted hardneſſe: ſo did *Pharaohs* heart, and *Sauls*, and *Ahabs*, ſeeme to give, and melt for a time, but they grew hard againe too ſoone. Take heede of that, if thy heart beginne to thaw, deſire God to follow thee with his grace, that it may not freeze againe.

3. After a thaw, though the Snow for the moſt part be vaniſhed and gone, yet under hedges and ditches, there will lie ſome leavings of it (as we cal them) a long time after; ſo when it hath pleaſed God to melt a mans heart for ſinne, yet there will be ſome leavings of corruption, ſome remainders of his old ſinnes, in the blinde and ſecret corners of his heart. So that the continuall care and daily practiſe of a Chriſtian muſt be to finde out and purge out theſe old

leavings

leavings of ſinne, that lye unmelted in his ſoule. 1 *Cor.*5.7.

4. The thaw makes the waies exceeding foule and cloggy which before were faire and cleane; ſo till a mans heart be thawed, he never perceives the foulenesse of the wayes of ſin, how they bemyre his ſoule, and clogge and hinder him in his paſſage to heaven: Saint *Peter* cals the world ἀυχμήεν τόπον, a ſqualid foule and filthy place (ſo the word ſignifies, 2 *Pet.*1.19.) a man ſhall have much adoe to keepe himſelfe unſpotted where ſo much filth and corruption is. *David found* this, and deſired of God, *Pſal.*69.15. *Eripe me de luto*; *Lord deliver me out of the myre that I ſinke not.* A wicked man thinkes the broad way to be the beſt way, but a man whoſe heart hath beene thawed, knowes it to be full of myre and ſloughes, and it is Gods mercy if they doe not ſinke irrecoverably.

5. While the froſt holds the plowes are lockt out of the earth, no ſeede can be ſowne, all husbandry is intermitted, till God ſend a thaw, and then their worke goes forward. So while men are frozen in ſin, Gods Plow can make no worke, the ſeed of his word can take no roote, γεωργία θεοῦ (as the Apoſtle cals the Miniſtry of the word, 1 *Cor.*3.) *Gods husbandry* doth no good, till there come an inward thaw to prepare and make way for grace, that mens hearts may bee wrought upon by the powerfull Goſpell of Ieſus Chriſt, then it is no griefe for a Miniſter to take paines in the Word and Doctrine of the Lord. Therefore *Iohn Baptiſt* was ſent before to prepare the way for Chriſt, and to thaw mens hearts by the preaching of repentance, that they might be capable of the Do-

ctrine of Christ, who was to sow the seede of eternall life in the world.

6. Lastly, after a thaw comes a flood, so after repentance follow teares. It was *Peters* case, *Luke* 22. 60. ἐν λαλῆντι, while hee was yet speaking, ere the word was out of his mouth, his heart began to melt, and *he went out and wept bitterly*. It was one of Gods charges to his people, *Exod.* 22.29. that they should not delay their liquors or drink-offrings: (So wee translate it) but in the Originall it is, *non tardabis lacrymam tuam, thou shalt not delay thy teares*: therefore if thou hast done any thing that needeth *Peters* teares, and hast not shed them, let me be thy Cocke, doe it now: what ever thou delayest, delay not that; for it is a ruled case in Divinity, that no man can come to heaven with dry eyes; therefore if thou findest thy eyes to be so dry, and thy heart so hard, that faine thou wouldest, but canst not weepe for sinne; desire God to smite thy heart, as *Moses* smote the Rocke, that the waters of repentance may gush forth in abundance: or as the words of my Text are, desire God to blow upon thy soule, with the vitall blasts of his holy Spirit, that these waters may flow, to wash and clense and carry away the mudde, and dregs, and filth of all thy sinnes.

I have done with my Text: God of his mercy give a blessing to it for Iesus sake our Lord and onely Saviour. *Amen.*

FINIS.